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R.S.P.  
Mar. 20, 1959

City manager

Richmond, Calif.

PROGRESS REPORT

REACTIONS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED

TO A SUGGESTION ON

"THE COORDINATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS"

BACKGROUND

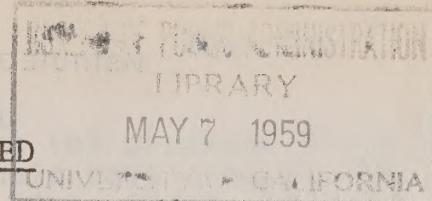
Recently a suggestion was prepared by this Office for the purpose of stimulating thought with respect to intergovernment organization. A copy of this original suggestion is attached as Exhibit II and, in essence, it offered the thought that in view of the rapid formation of local government units in each county (county, cities and districts) the time has possibly come to consider the need to coordinate these units of government. Such coordination would have as its objective the maximum county area development by uniting all local government with emphasis on inter-government cooperation and minimum local government tax cost.

The suggestion was advanced that a Local Government Coordinator position be created to perform some of the following duties: coordinate all long-range needs of cities, county and districts; encourage joint use of facilities and pooling of services; minimize establishment of new districts if service can be rendered by an established unit of government; watch all State and Federal legislation affecting any local government in the county; keep up with State and Federal aid programs which may be available to all local governments; etc.

COMMENTS RECEIVED TO DATE

This "think piece" was given preliminary circulation to some people in government, related associations, and in public administration fields at educational institutions. In general, the response was in favor of the above suggestion. Many offered comments and suggestions, briefed below, which improved our original suggestion. These were:

1. A municipal management organization felt that it was a good idea to have some point of coordination within county government for the planning and other functions which should be done intergovernmentally -- felt the idea would be applicable to urban counties in all parts of the United States.
2. From a representative of a public administration office of an educational institution came the comment that the suggestion was interesting and well worth implementing. An interesting counter-suggestion was offered that such a County Intergovernmental Coordinator should be backed up by some kind of an intergovernmental policy committee, possibly one selected from city, county, district legislative or administration officials, or some combination. In



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### ANSWER

this regard, reference was made to a section in the proposed Marin County Charter, defeated in November, which would have established a Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. (This Charter Section has been reproduced in entirety as Exhibit I to this Summary.)

3. A county association felt our suggestion ably and succinctly discussed a problem which is on all of our minds all the time and hoped to have an early conference at which time just such a suggestion could be discussed.

4. A national municipal organization routed the suggestion to each of its staff, one of whom felt very little chance at any real coordination could be accomplished by such a Coordinator in view of all the various independent governing boards. The rest of the staff felt the suggestion was good, but of those, most felt the Coordinator should be independent and objective in his thinking. In order to insure that his viewpoint would not be oriented only to the unit of government that paid his salary, a suggestion was advanced to have such a Coordinator responsible to an Inter-Governmental Executive Council. This Executive Council would be selected from a larger body to be known as the Contra Costa County Inter-Governmental Assembly, with a representative from each of the County's 167 local government units.

5. An area development organization felt our suggestions advanced merited very careful study and a great deal of consideration.

6. A county public administrator indicated his full agreement with our analysis of today's special district situation and agreed there is a definite need to develop better inter-governmental integration. He agreed a position needed to be established with responsibility for the coordination of all local government units and recommended such be established in the chief administrative office.

7. An association of taxpayers discussed this suggestion, feeling in general that if such a program of coordination of local government was established, it would serve as a recognition of the fact that local government units do not exist as islands of government but should be integrated to provide the most economic and efficient services required by the public. Comments were also offered that presently local government exists on a competitive relationship which is not felt to be conducive to the providing of services in the most effective and economical manner. It was also commented that other counties have considered similar suggestions but each has been in much more of a limited nature than was advanced in our proposal. The suggestion was advanced that if such a position were established in the Office of the County Administrator it should be of the level and pay status of an Assistant County Administrator in order to perform duties as specified in our proposal.



SUMMARY

As additional comments are received, either to the original proposal or to this Progress Report, a consensus will be prepared and distributed. As seen above, the general reaction to the original suggestion was well received. One of the main concerns expressed by several was the need to achieve objectivity or impartiality with respect to equitably dealing with or giving representation to all levels of local government. Any additional comments or suggestions would be welcomed.

*Edwin S. Howell*

Edwin S. Howell  
City Manager  
City Hall  
Richmond, California

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SUMMARY

Is this the right time to move forward with a new city manager? The answer is yes, but only if the city manager is chosen through a transparent and competitive process. The city manager should be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the city, but the ultimate decision-making power should remain with the city council. This will ensure that the city's interests are best served by a professional who is committed to the well-being of the community.

Richard S. Howell  
City Manager  
City Hall  
Ripon, California

RECOMMENDED

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## EXHIBIT I

One approach to the coordination of local government was contained in a proposed County charter for Marin County. (This Charter was defeated by the voters in November, 1958). The proposed section:

### "ARTICLE 7 - INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

"7.01. Statement of Policy. It shall be the policy of the County to encourage and promote coordination and cooperation between and among the County and the governmental entities operating wholly or partly within the County, including but not limited to cities and special and other public districts; and specifically to encourage and promote increased efficiency and economy in governmental operations within the County through performance by the County of the functions of such governmental entities whenever practicable and consistent with State law.

### "7.02. Statement of Powers.

"A. Powers of Board of Supervisors. The Board of Supervisors is hereby empowered to make provision from time to time in its discretion for the assumption and discharge by the officers, offices, agencies, and departments of the County of specific functions of governmental entities operating wholly or partly within the County, where such assumption and discharge and the terms thereof are mutually acceptable to the County and the governmental entity concerned and are not prohibited by State law.

"The Board of Supervisors shall determine the times at which, the periods for which, and the terms and conditions upon which each such arrangement shall be made; and these and all other pertinent matters shall be embodied in a written agreement between the County and the governmental entity concerned.

"Any such agreement may provide that designated officers or employees of the governmental entity concerned, providing they have been engaged for not less than 6 months in performance of the functions which are the subject of the agreement, shall or may become employees of the County in its classified civil service, with or without examination; and in such event the agreement shall provide for the terms and conditions of their entry into the service of the County, including their participation in seniority, sick leave, vacation, and other rights and benefits applicable to county employees.

"B. Recommendations of Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission and Personnel Commission. Before making any such agreement as is contemplated by this section, the Board of Supervisors shall receive and consider a report and recommendations thereon made by the Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission; and the Board may request

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said Commission to make such a report and recommendations at any time and specify within what period of time such report and recommendations shall be submitted to the Board. Before including in any such agreement provisions for the blanketing into county civil service of officers or employees of the governmental entity concerned, the Board of Supervisors shall receive and consider a report and recommendations thereon made by the Personnel Commission; and the Board may request said Commission to make such a report and recommendations at any time and specify within what period of time such report and recommendations shall be submitted to the Board.

"C. Notice to Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission. In all cases of proposals for the formation of new governmental entities wholly or partly within the County, or for the accomplishing of any change in the boundaries, functions, or operations of any such entities already in existence, or for their consolidation or joint exercise of powers, or for their dissolution, where such proposals under the provisions of State law are initiated by or before or otherwise officially come before the Board of Supervisors; the Board shall receive and consider a report and recommendations thereon made by the Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission, and the Board may request said Commission to make such a report and recommendations at any time and specify within what period of time such report and recommendations shall be submitted to the Board. Nothing contained in this paragraph shall in any way limit or restrict the power of the Board of Supervisors to act on any such proposal within the time or in the manner prescribed by State law.

"7.03. Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission. There shall be an Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission consisting of 7 members.

"A. Appointment, Qualifications, and Term. The members of the Commission shall be appointed by the affirmative vote of a majority of the entire Board of Supervisors. Members shall have the qualifications required of county officers by State law, and may not hold other county office while serving on the Commission; in addition, each member must have been a resident of the County for at least 3 years immediately preceding the time he takes office. Their terms of office shall be 4 years; except that the terms of those first appointed after the effective date of this Charter shall expire, one on June 30, 1960, and 2 each on June 30 of 1961, 1962, and 1963.

"B. Compensation. Members of the Commission shall receive such compensation, if any, as may be fixed by the Board of Supervisors from time to time. Members shall be reimbursed for their reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. Such compensation, if any, as may be fixed by the Board of Subordinates from time to time. Member shall be reimbursed for their expenses such compensation, if any, as may be fixed by the Board of Subordinates "B. Compensation. Member of the Commission shall receive

"C. Vacancy. A vacancy on the Commission shall be filled by the Board of Supervisors for the unexpired term, in the same manner as for an original appointment.

"D. Removal. A member of the Commission shall be subject to removal at any time by the affirmative vote of 5/7ths of the entire Board of Supervisors.

"7.04. General Powers and Duties of the Commission. The Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission shall have the following powers and duties.

"A. Generally. The Commission shall have (1) all powers granted and duties imposed by State law, except as the same may be expressly limited or modified by this Charter or by ordinance of the Board of Supervisors; (2) all powers granted and duties imposed by this Charter; and (3) all powers granted and duties imposed by the Board of Supervisors.

"B. Studies. The Commission shall study and familiarize itself with the functions and operations of all governmental entities now or hereafter operating wholly or partly within the County, including but not limited to cities and special and other public districts and the relations among them and between them and the County; shall study and explore the possibilities and the advantages and disadvantages of increased coordination and cooperation among them and between them and the County; shall ascertain the extent to which and the means by which greater efficiency and economy of operation of such entities may be accomplished; and shall render reports thereon to the Board of Supervisors.

"C. Investigations. On its own motion, and whenever requested to do so by the Board of Supervisors, the Commission shall investigate the desirability and practicality of the assumption and discharge by the County of specific functions of such governmental entities, under contractual arrangements that may be mutually acceptable to the County and the entity concerned; and shall report thereon to the Board of Supervisors.

"In all cases of proposals for the formation of new governmental entities wholly or partly within the County, or for the accomplishing of any change in the boundaries, functions, or operations of any such entities already in existence, or for their consolidation or joint exercise of powers, or for their dissolution; the Commission shall ascertain the pertinent facts and the probable consequences thereof and shall report thereon to the Board of Supervisors.



"In addition, as to any such proposal that falls within the jurisdiction of the Boundary Commission of the County or of the County Committee on School District Organization, the Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission shall assist and cooperate with said Boundary Commission and said County Committee, and shall undertake such investigations and studies as may be requested by either body and render its report and recommendations thereon to such body.

"In the case of proposals within the jurisdiction or concern of the Board of Supervisors involving unification or other change relating to school districts wholly or partly within the County, the Commission shall upon request of the Board ascertain the pertinent facts and probable consequences thereof and shall report thereon to the Board.

"D. Counseling. The Commission shall, upon request, make its facilities and advices available without charge to governmental entities wholly or partly within the County, and to residents of the County interested in the formation, modification, consolidation, or dissolution of such entities, in their operational practices, in the joint exercise of their powers, in their relations to each other and to the County, or in the improvement of their structure or operations. The extent to which Commission facilities and advice shall be made available in any given instance shall be determined by the Commission in its discretion, in the light of its other duties and commitments, the staff and funds placed at its disposal by the Board of Supervisors, the relative importance of the subject matter involved in the request, and other relevant factors.

"E. Redistricting. Whenever requested to do so by the Board of Supervisors, and in any event not less than once every five years, the Commission shall make a report to the Board of Supervisors on the boundaries of the supervisorial districts of the County, which report shall embody the recommendations of the Commission as to what changes, if any, should be made in the boundaries of such districts. The districts shall be as nearly equal in population as may be, except that in recommending any change in boundaries the Commission may give consideration to the following factors: (a) topography, (b) geography, (c) cohesiveness, contiguity, integrity, and compactness of territory, and (d) community of interests of the districts.

"F. Joint Powers Agreements. The Commission, upon express authorization of the Board of Supervisors in each case, may act as the agency to administer or execute a joint powers agreement entered into between public agencies pursuant to State law, provided that either the County or a governmental entity operating wholly or partly within the County is a party to the agreement.



"G. Hearings. The Commission may hold public hearings upon any subject within its jurisdiction. All County administrative offices, agencies, and departments, through their respective executive officer or department head, shall cooperate with the Commission by furnishing data, information, reports, and recommendations whenever reasonably requested to do so by the Commission; and such executive officers or department heads shall appear at meetings of the Commission when reasonably requested to do so, for the purpose of assisting the Commission in its investigations and deliberations.

"7.05. Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinator.

"A" County Manager. The County Manager shall be ex officio Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinator and shall serve as the executive officer of the Intergovernmental Coordinating Commission, except as provided in Paragraph B of this section.

"B. Authorization for Coordinator. The Board of Supervisors may authorize the County Manager to appoint an Intergovernmental Affairs Coordinator, who shall serve as the executive officer of the Commission.

"7.06. Limited Application to School Districts. Except as specifically provided in Paragraph C of Section 7.04 the provisions of this article shall not be applicable to school districts."



## EXHIBIT II

### THE COORDINATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT UNITS

The last ten years in local government has seen the rapid development of a new form of government called "Special Districts", each created usually to serve a single function, some multi-function; others, multi-county. According to the State Controller, Contra Costa County had 121 special districts in 1956-57, the third largest number of special districts of any county in the State, exceeded only by Los Angeles with 362 special districts and Sacramento with 143.

The 121 special districts for Contra Costa County had a total expenditure in 1956-57 of \$8,243,177; together they spent \$1,286,335 in capital outlays that year. Their combined assessed valuation was \$2,735,908,130 and their outstanding indebtedness was \$7,785,800. Special districts, then, have grown to the stature of big business in the operation of today's local government.

In addition to the County's special districts, there are also 34 school districts, 11 incorporated cities, and one county government unit, making 167 local units of government each with a common objective, serving the needs of the citizens of the County of which they are a part.

It would appear, therefore, that local government today has become quite complex with numerous units of government adopting budgets, setting tax rates, and operating independently of each other and, perhaps at times, in competition with each other. No longer is the tax rate of any one single local government unit important to a new industry contemplating its location in our County, but rather the important factor is, what is the total local government tax rate, which total includes the rates of the County, its districts, and the City, if any.

At least three alternates are possible when attempting to hold the line on total local government cost - either: (1) don't form new districts; (2) consolidate existing ones; or (3) provide better coordination between existing units. Curbing the formation of new units of government has not always met with success in view of the fact that such units are usually formed by the vote of the people, not always considering all alternates available. Likewise, attempts at consolidating districts have not always met with success, since many units prefer to remain autonomous of each other.

There remains one course of action, the need for which appears to be becoming more evident daily, and that is a better means of coordinating the common needs, of pooling the joint facilities, and of exchanging the mutual ideas of all of these local governments in the interest of achieving maximum service with minimum cost. One of the real possibilities of economy in government today is to develop



Exhibit II (continued)

better inter-government integration of resources, both human and physical. One means of attempting better inter-relations of local government units would be the establishment of a position within county government aimed at the coordination of all units of local government. Such an intergovernment liaison position would have as a responsibility a list of duties such as the following:

1. Offering advisory service to areas considering the formation of new districts with recommendations as to whether the proposed service can be rendered better by an established unit of government or by any combination thereof.
2. An understanding of the formation and organization of government, together with the needs and programs of each unit of government for the purpose of encouraging all local units of government to work together in as economical a manner as possible.
3. To encourage a maximum exchange of information between local government units including the conducting of intergovernment conferences.
4. Coordinating of long-range capital needs of local government units and advisory services as to programming the presentation of bond elections before the voters.
5. To encourage the joint use of facilities, equipment, office space, etc., in the interests of the reduction of capital expenditures.
6. Provide a technical legislative advisory service, watching all state and federal legislation, protecting the interests of all local government units, working with state and federal legislative representatives assisting in the advancement of the legislative programs of local governments.
7. Advise local governments on state and federal relations as well as of loans and grants which may be available to each unit.
8. Effect economies wherever possible by instituting such improvements as joint local purchasing for local government, short-cuts in methods, and the joint use of such administrative facilities as data processing.

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